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ABSTRACT

Due to increased dissatisfaction with Media Services, the evaluation department of Eugene School District 4J was asked to look into the centralized ordering and processing of library materials and textbooks. Areas of complaint included time lags in receiving books, loss of control of ordering and processing at the school level, and processing errors. Data were collected in 43 interviews, questionnaires were sent to all district schools, and a random sample search was made of 36,000 media service orders. A number of findings emerged, including the findings that unacceptably long time lags exist in ordering and processing; school personnel have lost control over ordering and processing, but this is inevitable in a centralized system; and Media Services has acknowledged processing errors and is trying to correct them. Included in the report is a brief history of the district's centralized processing system, the methodology used to review the complaints, five tables showing actual time lags involved in the major steps of ordering and processing broken down by type of book and type of school, and a discussion of the complaints. The report concludes with recommendations for the establishment of an advisory committee and a review of Media Services' staffing. (Author/LD)

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An Evaluation of Coomplaints about the Operation of the District'ss Centralized System for the Ordering and Processsing of Library and Textbooks

May, 1976

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and Evaluation
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EA 011 449

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Introduction and History

The Evaluation Department was asked by numerous District personnel to look at the centralized ordering and processing of library and text books. Since Media Services was expanded in 1974, there has been increased dissatisfaction with the service provided. Areas of complaint include the time lag in receiving materials, the loss of control of the system at the school level, and the quality of cataloging and processing.

A brief history of Media Services and the centralized ordering and processing system is included in this introduction. The paper has been organized around the complaints received during interviews and in the questionnaires. It was felt that this type of organization best reflected the concerns of the school personnel. A section on methodology follows the Introduction and History, and then the time lag in receiving materials, loss of control of the system by the schools, effect of centralization on school staffing, the quality of cataloging and processing, and complaints that centralized ordering and processing does not achieve its stated goals, are considered in turn.

During the course of interviews and on the questionnaires, school staff made suggestions about other facets of Media Services not directly related to the ordering and processing of library and text books. Two of these were requests for an expansion of the union file and concern over periodical subscriptions. Since these went beyond the scope of the current study, they were not explored in any systematic way, but are discussed here as possible areas for further consideration. Finally, those factors which appear to have contributed to the difficulties encountered in the expansion of centralized ordering and processing are considered, and the Evaluation Department's recommendations are made.

Centralized ordering and processing of library material began in District 4J at the elementary school level 25 years ago. In 1965, it was expanded to include the junior high schools. In 1974, the decision was made to further expand this program to include senior high library materials, senior high bindery, junior and senior high audio-visual materials and textbooks for all grade levels. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent for Business Services said that it was thought that having all materials ordered and processed centrally would be cheaper and more efficient. Also, it would free the media specialists to devote more of their time to readers' services rather than to clerical work. While the closing of South Eugene High School's library two days a week in January, 1973 was a contributing factor, the decision was not made for that reason alone.

In January, 1974 the Superintendent asked the Coordinator of Library Services to write a proposed budget for a centralized ordering and processing system including all library materials and textbooks. The

first budget she prepared would have totaled $99,400.00. The Superintendent and his staff considered this too high, since it was felt that one of the advantages of the centralization should be reduced cost. The revised estimate was $77,900.00. Most of this decrease was in the amount requested for staff.

According to the Superintendent, no cost estimates were done of what the decentralized system cost the District. The Superintendent and some members of his staff looked at the personnel figures for the buildings, but that was all that was done to assess the cost of the decentralized system. The question of the expansion of the centralized system did not appear on the agenda of any Administrative Staff meetings. The Superintendent said that he thought this decision was made as part of the budget process.

The integration was implemented over the course of two years--senior high textboks and bindery in July, 1974; senior high library books in November, 1974; elementary and junior high textbooks in January, 1975; and junior and senior high audio-visual materials in March, 1976.

The decision to expand centralized ordering and processing was made by the Superintendent and some members of his staff at about the same time that the District was reorganized. The positions of Coordinator of Library Services, Coordinator of Audio-Visual Services and Coordinator of Radio and T.V. were abolished and were replaced by the position of Coordinator of Media Services. Helen Tyler, who had been Coordinator of Library Services, was rehired and became Coordinator of Media Services. Media Services is now responsible for all of these functions. The administrative responsibility for the Media Services Department lies first in the Media Coordinator's office and above that, in the office of the Assistant Superintendent for Business Services.

The Media Services Department has four sections within it. The largest of these, Technical Services, supports the school level library program by providing central ordering, processing and distribution of instructional materials to the schools. These functions were part of Library Services before reorganization. At this time, the staff of Technical Services includes 8.5 clerks and 2.5 catalogers. This report is primarily concerned with operation of the Technical Services section.

The maintenance of clocks, intercoms and other related electrical equipment, formerly part of Maintenance, was added to the audio-visual equipment repair section in April, 1975 and the staff of this section was increased by one. Four electronic technicians are employed in this section. One full-time radio engineer and a part-time relief announcer work in the radio-T.V. section.

In January, 1975 distribution of District publications was transferred from Warehouse to Media Services. No additional personnel was provided when this responsibility was transferred to Media Services. The 0.5 Cataloger works with the other half of her time as an 0.5 publications clerk.

In 1975-76, the budget for Library Services was $1,242,621.00. Of this, $950,336.00 was for school programs, and $264,654.00 was for Media Services. All four sections of Media Services were included in the $264,654.00 figure. Individual budgets are not available for the sections of Media Services.

While many other school districts in the state order and process library books centrally, only one other school district has a centralized system for processing textbooks, Portland has had a centralized system for processing textbooks for the kindergarten through eighth grade for 20 years, but has never centrally processed textbooks for secondary schools.

Methodology of the Study

A problem encountered in this study was the limited amount of verifiable data. With the exception of Media Services' permanent order files and workload statistics, no operating records were available, and many of the complaints were not open to verification. In a number of instances, some of those interviewed felt that the performance of Media Services in a given area was reason for complaint, while others did not think that a problem existed. This was particularly evident in the comments about the cataloging and processing done by Media Services.

Since no cost analyses or staffing studies were done prior to the expansion of centralized ordering/processing, it was not possible to make detailed comparisons between the costs and performance of the new centralized system versus the costs and performance of the old system, although some general comments can be made. It was possible to establish the present amount of time book orders spend at each stage of the ordering and processing system, but because Media Services only began keeping these records after their expansion and many schools maintained no dated records of their processing time, it was not possible to make any accurate comparison between past and present performance.

When looking at the history of the expansion of centralized ordering/processing, the study was hampered by conflicting information and lack of documentation. The only documents that exist relating to this period are the budget proposals prepared by the Coordinator of Library Services. No record at all exists of the decision-making process that created the new system of centralized processing. The question of the expansion of centralized ordering/processing did not

appear on the agenda of any of the Administrative Staff meetings, and the Superintendent believes that the decision was made as part of the budget process.

Given the lack of existing documentation, three major sources of data were generated: interviews, a school questionnaire and a record search. The rest of this methodology section describes these data sources in turn.

Interviews

Personnel from both schools and the Education Center were interviewed. An interview was done at each of the four high school libraries. At one school only the librarian was interviewed; at the other three schools, one or more other staff members were involved. In all, four librarians, two assistant librarians, one audio-visual specialist, and two library clerks were seen at the high school libraries. The social studies department chairmen of two high schools were also interviewed. At the junior high school level, the media specialists of two schools, a teacher/media specialist of an alternative school and the principal and teachers' management team of another school were interviewed. Two elementary school principals and two elementary school media specialists were interviewed. All but three of the school staff interviewed had some complaints about the centralized ordering the processing system; however, this should not be taken as representative of the feelings of all schools. Most, but not all, interviewed were those identified through documentation provided by the curriculum specialists as having complaints about the centralized system. This is also the reason that more people were interviewed at the senior high schools than at the other school levels. Senior high schools have been more vocal in their dissatisfaction with centralized ordering and processing.

Those interviewed at the Education Center included the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent for Business Services and the Coordinator of Media Services. Nine other members of the Media Services staff were interviewed--three catalogers, three acquisitions clerks, a secretary/processing clerk, and two processing clerks.

Representatives of Hinbers Book Co., Baker and Taylor, and the Northwest Textbook Depository were contacted for information on their operation and delivery time. These are the three major book wholesalers used by the District. District 48J in Beaverton and District 1J in Portland were contacted for copies of studies they had done recently on the service provided by the vendors used by those districts. Several local libraries--University of Oregon, Lane Community College, District 19 in Springfield, District 69 in Junction City, and the Eugene Public Library--were asked for comparative information on the performance of magazine vendors and publishers. A total of 43 people were interviewed--23 in in-depth interviews, 11 in group situations, and 9 in telephone conversations.

Record Search

Media Services began keeping permanent order files shortly after it began ordering and posting textbooks. One section of the order card was kept for each book. Approximately six months later, in December of 1974 or January of 1975, it began stamping transaction dates on the order cards. The files are divided into library book orders and textbook orders. Each of these categories is arranged by school type: senior high, junior high and elementary school.

Given a large and unknown number of records, a 5% random sample of the order cards was run. The results are described in the next section. A total of 430 textbook cards and 1,389 library cards were found from an estimated population of approximately 36,000 cards. The results were keypunched. Computer assistance was provided by Lane Council of Governments.

Questionnaire to Schools

A questionnaire was used to gather information on the schools' degree of satisfaction with the centralized ordering/processing system. The Coordinator of Media Services, a curriculum specialist and two librarians provided assistance by reviewing the questionnaire and offering suggestions for additional questions. Many of these were used, though all could not be incorporated due to lack of space. The questionnaire was sent to all principals with instructions to give it to the appropriate person on their staff. All schools received the same first two pages of the questionnaire. Elementary schools received an additional page on the centralized ordering/processing of audio-visual materials since their audio-visual materials have always been handled centrally. The senior high schools received a page with additional questions about the ordering/processing of library books because this was handled by the individual senior high schools until two years ago.

All returned the questionnaire, but one junior high stated it was unable to provide accurate answers. Some of the schools did not answer every question. All of the junior and senior high questionnaires were completed by the media specialist/librarian. Four of the elementary school questionnaires were filled out by the principal; eight by the media specialist/librarian; eleven by both the principal and media specialist; three by the principal, media specialist and school secretary; two by the media specialist and school secretary; and one by the school secretary and media aide. There was greater diversity in the people completing the questionnaire at the elementary school level because (1) the school secretary is responsible for textbook ordering at some of the schools, and (2) not all of the elementary schools have media specialists.

This study of centralized ordering and processing took over five months to complete. The Evaluation Department was fortunate in being able to hire an experienced II person to carry out the study. Approximately $1,300.00 was spent on her salary and an additional $130.00 for the salaries of two extra-help clerks and a temporary keypuncher.

Claimed Impact of Centralized System

In her Review of Centralized Processing, July 1974 to February 1975 (page 2), the Coordinator of Media Services said that a centralized processing system has the following advantages: (1) it relieves the school library staff of work that is largely clerical in nature, and frees them to extend and refine their services to the faculty and students. It also allows the librarian to develop and teach library skill usage programs, thereby substantiating and re-emphasizing the need for professional, certified library personnel; (2) better quality of cataloging (is) received when it is done by professional catalogers; (3) centralized processing offers district-wide conformity and consistency in purely technical procedures; uniformity contributes to facility and economy in production; (4) cost analyses indicate that it is economically sound to avoid, whenever possible, the duplication of effort apparent when each building provides its own technical services; (5) there are some savings to a district in that it reduces the need for multiple purchase of many supply and equipment items which each school doing its own processing would need. A processing center can have automated equipment, which speeds up the processing operation, e.g., have equipment for card duplication, electric typewriters, and erasers, pasting and labeling machines, etc.

Those school personnel who have complaints about the expanded centralized system claim that since the expansion of centralized ordering and processing, the level of service they are able to provide for students and staff has decreased. They claim that the expansion of the centralized system has the following disadvantages: (1) the time lag between the time a school orders a book and the time it is ready for use by students and teachers has increased substantially; (2) there has been a loss of control of ordering and processing procedures at the school level; (3) the quality of cataloging and processing has been inferior to that done by the individual schools; and (4) centralized processing has not resulted in a savings of either money or staff time.

Time Lag in Receiving Instructional Materials

The amount of time elapsed between when a school sent an order to Media Services and when it received the book(s) was identified as the most serious complaint about the centralized ordering/processing system during interviews and in responses to questionnaires. Thirty-three schools (75) of the schools responding to the questionnaire answered that they are receiving textbooks slower now than when the individual schools ordered and processed their own books. Three (7%) answered that they are now getting textbooks faster, and one (10%), that the time was unchanged about the same. All four senior high schools responded that they are receiving library books slower now than when they ordered and processed the books themselves. The time lag was considered to be a major problem by 11 of the 18 school staff members interviewed. It is reasonable to infer that comments made by the staff interviewed are reflective of the views of many other school staff.

A 10 random sample was taken of Media Services' permanent order files and this provided information on the amount of time elapsed at each stage of the ordering and processing system. Four transaction dates are said to be created on each card: when Media Services received the school's order, when Media Services sent the order to the vendor, when the book ordered is received, and when the book is sent to the school. As part of the random sample search, the number of calendar days that elapsed between each date was recorded. Also recorded was the school type and book type. Figure 1 shows the possible comparisons that can be made given the number of days that elapsed between the individual dates.

Figure 1

Description of Transaction Dates

Date 1	Date 2	Date 3	Date 4
When Media Services received the order from the school	When Media Services sent the order to the publisher	When Media Services received the book ordered from the publisher.	When Media Services sent the book to the school

Time 1 Time 2 Time 3

Time 1 is the number of calendar days it took Media Services to prepare an order to be sent to the vendor.

Time T is the number of cylinder days it took the vendor to fill the order.

Time S is the number of cylinder days it took Mobile Specialties to process the book.

Time L and Time S equal the cylinder days it took Mobile Specialties to both wind the order and process the book.

Total Time equals the total of Times L, S and T. This time is the number of cylinder days that elapsed between when a sales order entered a book and when the ordered received it.

The Five Cubits is this section considers each of these times in turn. The data are presented so the whole the associated processes are and are based on the 15 objects randomly selected. Approximately 95,000 records were examined to obtain data. Tables L, S and T provided data on Times L, S and T respectively. These tables show the number and percent of books received by the number of days elapsed by either type and book type. The mean number of elapsed days by either type and book type are also given. Table M provides the total number of days elapsed between when a either ordered and received a book. Again, the data are cross-categorized by either and book type. Table N gives comparisons between Time L and Time S, Time S and Time T, and Time L plus Time S compared to Time T. These three presentations compare how long it took Mobile Specialties to handle the book orders versus how long it took the vendors to handle the book order. Because of the wide range of elapsed days, comparisons were computed based entirely on the logarithm data.

Time S reflects not only the time taken by the vendor to fill an order, but also the mail and shipping time, and the time taken by the Business Office to generate a purchase order. The Business Office data base maintains a purchase order date to date that has an issue day, to process.

The vendor time of fulfillment includes and Stamper's including determining stock book are not obtained to the Stocks will ensure books accumulate to permit large shipping costs. Vendor representatives say that books may sit in the warehouse for a week or more. The fulfillment department are not straight to permit vendor representatives' comments about the turnaround of book accumulation and shipping costs. In some cases, Time S processing time includes the time necessary to obtain material that was received damaged by the vendor for replacement.

Schmidt may not receive the book until several additional steps are taken. Invoices which are not on the approved list or by the Stocks Division Material Specialist before going to Mobile Specialties. This would not affect purchases on the approved list of frequently books.

Also, there can be a delay before the books are delivered to the schools. The warehouse picks up books from Media Services daily, but only delivers them to the schools once a week. Therefore, a book can spend up to a week in the District's warehouse after processing is completed. There can be a further delay at the schools while the school does additional processing of the books. These three time periods are not shown in Media Services' records, and an accurate determination of the average number of days taken by these steps was not attempted.

As the tables show, transaction dates did not appear on the cards in a substantial number of cases. A code was used for those instances where dates were missing. Dates were missing on far more of the library book cards than the textbook cards. The percent of textbook cards without dates never went above 55%, and occasionally was as low as 3% or 4%. For some categories, 83% of the library book cards were without transaction dates. The percent of library book cards without dates never went below 40%.

Generally speaking, those categories of books which had the greatest number of missing dates were also the categories that had the longest average time taken to order and process the books. A correlation coefficient was computed on this relationship, and the correlation was almost perfect.

Media Services said that several factors contributed to the large number of cards without dates. Media Services did not begin dating textbook cards until six months after it began maintaining the files. It began dating library book records a few months later. At one time, cards for out-of-print books were left in the permanent order file even though these books were never received from the vendor and the transaction never completed. During the summer and fall of 1975, when Media Services was overwhelmed by the number of textbook orders, all other work was slighted and dating of cards was erratic for that period. Staff from other departments were helping Media Services at that time, and more clerical errors occurred. The higher rate of missing transaction dates in the senior high textbooks compared to elementary or junior high textbooks might be due to one of the senior high schools sending undated order cards to Media Services for books which had been ordered before the expansion of the centralized system. These undated order cards were included in the Media Services files.

Our findings on the lack of transaction dates contradict the comments contained in a six-month review of programs, dated March 17, 1975 and prepared by the office of the Media Coordinator. This report states, "all transactions involving each school have been carefully dated...", and later in the report it says, "In addition to date stamping all transactions, production statistics are kept..."

If budgetary resources had permitted, a similar random sample records search could have been done for textbooks and senior high library books ordered directly by the schools before centralized ordering/processing was expanded; however, such a search would only yield information for a time period comparable to Time 2 in Media Services' records. Some schools do have invoices with dates ordered and received, but the schools do not have any dated records of the length of time books spent in processing when this was done by the schools. Some elementary and junior high schools claim that the centralized ordering and processing of their library books was faster before Media Services was expanded. However, since Media Services only began keeping records with transaction dates after the expansion, it was not possible to prove or disprove this claim.

Table 1 shows the mean number of calendar days elapsed between when Media Services receives an order from a school and when the order is sent to the vendor. Library books take longer on the average to order than textbooks, elementary books take the longest, and high school books the shortest. The length of time taken to order books varies substantially. For example, the range is from same day to 60 days for elementary textbooks, but from same day to 30 days for high school textbooks. All high school textbooks were ordered within 30 days, but 11.7% of the elementary textbooks took longer than 30 days to order. The analysis of library book ordering is difficult because of the very high proportions of missing transaction dates.

Table 2 shows the mean number of days elapsed between when Media Services sends an order to the vendor and when the book is received from the vendor. Elementary and junior high textbooks take the shortest time and elementary library books and senior high textbooks take the longest time. A representative of Northwest Textbook Depository said that the greater diversity in senior high textbooks may be responsible for the delay in receiving them from the vendor. The Northwest Textbook Depository representative also said that ideally, the Depository should fill orders within five days of receiving the order, but lately, time has increased to 7 to 14 days. More experimental books are used in the senior high schools. These are more likely not to be part of the normal inventory of the wholesaler and have to be special-ordered from the publisher. The representative said that there also may be more back orders (orders for items which are part of the normal inventory, but are temporarily out of stock) for senior high textbooks.

Elementary and junior high library books take longer to come from the vendor than do textbooks for these grade levels. The representatives

Table 1

Number and Percentage of Orders by Number of Days Elapsed
Between Media Services Receiving Order from School and Sending Order to Vendor

	Textbooks			Library Books		
	Elementary	Jr. High	Sr. High	Elem.	Jr. High	Sr. High
Mean number of days	14.38	9.76	11.08	17.29	14.36	14.00
Same day	100 2.7%	140 7.5%	280 9.5%	60 0.6%	0	20 0.3%
1-5 days	1,360 36.0%	800 43.0%	560 18.9%	480 4.4%	680 7.5%	660 8.4%
6-10 days	200 5.3%	180 9.7%	200 6.8%	260 2.4%	500 5.5%	160 2.0%
11-15 days	520 13.8%	200 10.8%	100 3.4%	140 1.3%	320 3.5%	440 5.6%
16-30 days	1,060 28.0%	380 20.4%	800 27.0%	540 5.0%	320 3.5%	560 7.1%
31-45 days	400 10.6%	80 4.3%	0	340 3.1%	460 5.1%	220 2.8%
46-60 days	40 1.1%	0	0	60 0.6%	0	0
61-75 days	0	0	0	0	0	0
76-90 days	0	0	0	0	0	0
91-120 days	0	0	0	0	0	0
121-150 days	0	0	0	0	0	0
Over 150 days	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cards missing dates	100 2.7%	80 4.3%	1,020 34.5%	9,020 82.8%	6,760 74.8%	5,780 73.7%
TOTAL	3,780 100%	1,860 100%	2,960 100%	10,900 100%	9,040 100%	7,840 100%

TTable 2

Number and Percentage of Orrders by Number of Days Elapsed Between Media Services Sendirng Order to Vendor and Receiving Order ffrom Vendor

	Textbookks			Library Books		
	Elementary	Jr. High	Sr. High	Elem.	Jr. High	Sr. High
Mean number of days	34.25	34..44	52.89	53.20	48.47	44.05
Same day	0	0	0	0	0	0
1-5 days	20 0.5%	20 1.1%	0	20 0.2%	0	0
6-10 days	60 1.5%	80 4.3%	0	0	0	20 0.3%
11-15 days	60 1.5%	20 1.1%	120 4.1%	0	20 0.2%	0
16-30 days	1,360 34.2%	500 26.9%	560 18.9%	760 7.0%	860 9.5%	940 12.0%
31-45 days	1,380 34.7%	560 30.1%	460 15.5%	740 7.0%	1,120 12.4%	1,320 16.8%
46-60 days	460 11.5%	140 7.5%	220 7.4%	1,940 17.8%	680 7.5%	540 6.9%
61-75 days	160 4.0%	80 4.3%	140 4.7%	100 0.9%	160 1.8%	100 1.3%
76-90 days	20 0.5%	0	20 0.7%	20 0.2%	20 0.2%	20 0.3%
91-120 days	0	20 1.1%	120 4.1%	160 1.5%	340 3.8%	80 1.0%
121-150 days	20 0.5%	0	100 3.4%	320 2.9%	140 1.6%	40 0.5%
Over 150 days	0	0	60 2.0%	0	0	100 1.3%
Cards missing dates	440 11.0%	440 23.7%	1,160 39.2%	6,840 62.8%	5,700 63.1%	4,660 59.4%
TOTAL	3,980 99.9%	1,860 100%	2,960 100%	10,900 100%	9,040 100%	7,840 100%

from Baker & Taylor and Northwest Textbook Depository said that it is not unusual for library books to take longer to arrive than textbooks, since there is a greater diversity in library books than in textbooks. In general, across all tables, the average time elapsed for library books is longer for almost every category than for textbooks. The one exception is the time between ordering and receiving senior high books from the vendor. This is 52.89 days for textbooks and 44.05 days for library books.

Table 3 shows the mean number of days elapsed between when a book is received and when it is sent to the school. Table 3 shows processing of junior and senior high textbooks averages about two days longer than for elementary textbooks. More processing is done on senior high books than on junior high and elementary books, which probably accounts for the longer processing time for senior high books. It is not known why junior high books have a longer average processing time than elementary books. Table 3 also shows a marked difference between the processing of textbooks and library books. Textbooks take less than a week to process and library books take approximately a month.

There are two reasons for the longer time lag for library books. First, when Media Services is deluged with textbooks, as happened in the summer and fall of 1975, the processing of library books is slowed, since Media Services gives textbook processing a higher priority. Textbook processing was also given first priority when processing was done by the individual schools. Second, generally more processing is done on library books than on textbooks. Textbooks are just stamped and given an inventory number, although senior high books also have a book card and pocket made. Approximately 25% of the library books received need to have original cataloging done. The other 75% (1) come with commercially cataloged, prepared cards, or (2) already have the necessary catalog information in Media Services' union files, since the District owns copies of the book. After library books are cataloged, catalog cards and book pocket and cards are made, and the Dewey decimal number is put on the spine. Elementary books also have pockets pasted in, plastic jackets put on, and cards put in order to be filed. Junior and senior high schools do these things themselves. While processing time for textbooks averages three to five days, library books average 27 to 34 days, depending on school type.

As Table 4 shows, the average total time required for a school to get a textbook is 50.89 days for elementary schools, 47.10 days for junior high schools, and 64.77 days for senior high schools. As Table 2 showed, most of the longer time lag in getting senior high textbooks is due to the time between ordering and receiving books from the vendor--53 days for senior high, compared to 34 days for elementary and junior high textbooks. The average total time for library books is 86.71 days for elementary schools, 77.85 days for junior high schools, and 75.41 for senior high.

Table 3

Number and Percentage of Orders by Number of Days Elapsed Between Media Services Receiving Order from Vendor and Distributing Book to School

	Textbooks			Library Books		
	Elementary	Jr. High	Sr. High	Elem.	Jr. High	Sr. High
Mean number of days	3.10	4.78	5.26	34.59	28.05	27.05
Same day	1,780 47.1%	560 30.1%	600 28.3%	0	100 1.1%	0
1-5 days	820 21.7%	480 25.8%	700 23.7%	160 1.5%	600 6.6%	340 4.3%
6-10 days	340 9.0%	180 9.7%	320 10.8%	340 3.1%	300 3.3%	700 8.9%
11-15 days	40 1.1%	120 6.5%	100 3.4%	460 4.2%	500 5.5%	760 9.7%
16-30 days	100 2.7%	60 3.2%	200 6.8%	1,840 16.9%	1,380 15.3%	1,140 14.5%
31-45 days	60 1.6%	40 2.2%	0	540 5.0%	760 8.4%	900 11.5%
46-60 days	0	0	20 0.7%	560 5.1%	320 3.5%	660 8.4%
61-75 days	0	0	0	480 4.4%	260 2.9%	160 2.0%
76-90 days	0	0	0	40 0.4%	160 1.8%	20 0.3%
91-120 days	0	0	0	180 1.7%	120 1.3%	0
121-150 days	0	0	0	20 0.2%	0	0
over 150 days	0	0	0	0	0	20 0.3%
Cards missing dates	640 16.9%	420 22.6%	1,020 34.5%	6,280 57.6%	4,540 50.2%	3,140 40.1%
TOTAL	3,780 100%	1,860 100%	2,960 100%	10,900 100%	9,040 100%	7,840 100%

Table 4

Number and Percentage of Orders by Number of Days Elapsed Between Media Services Receiving Order from School and Distributing Books to School

	Textbooks			Library Books		
	Elementary	Jr. High	Sr. High	Elem.	Jr. High	Sr. High
Mean number of days	50.89	47.10	64.77	86.71	77.85	75.41
Same day	0	0	0	0	0	0
1-5 days	0	0	0	0	0	0
6-10 days	0	20 1.1%	0	0	0	0
11-15 days	80 2.1%	60 3.2%	20 0.7%	0	0	0
16-30 days	520 13.8%	60 3.2%	160 5.4%	0	40 0.4%	20 0.3%
31-45 days	720 19.0%	620 33.3%	260 8.8%	340 3.1%	180 2.0%	380 4.9%
46-60 days	720 19.0%	280 15.0%	240 8.1%	120 1.1%	420 4.7%	340 4.3%
61-75 days	540 14.3%	280 15.0%	280 9.5%	240 2.2%	400 4.4%	380 4.9%
76-90 days	380 10.0%	40 2.2%	120 4.1%	360 3.3%	620 6.9%	340 4.3%
91-120 days	80 2.1%	20 1.1%	80 2.7%	460 4.2%	400 4.4%	460 5.9%
121-150 days	20 0.5%	20 1.1%	60 2.0%	300 2.8%	200 2.2%	100 1.3%
Over 150 days	0	0	100 3.4%	20 0.2%	0	40 0.5%
Cards missing dates	720 19.0%	460 24.7%	1,640 55.4%	9,060 83.1%	6,780 75.0%	5,780 73.7%
TOTAL	3,780 100%	1,860 100%	2,960 100%	10,900 100%	9,040 100%	7,840 100%

The range of total time varies by type of book. The minimum times elapsed between date ordered and date sent to schools are shorter for textbooks and shortest for junior high textbooks.

In the questionnaire sent to schools, school personnel were asked to estimate the average total time they thought it took for them to receive textbooks and library books. A number of schools estimated the average time required to get a textbook as significantly shorter than it actually is. Twelve elementary schools thought the average time was 30 days or less. One senior high estimated the average time to receive textbooks was 47 days. This reports finds that school staff are not generally aware of what actual time lags are.

Schools were asked if textbooks were coming faster under the new system. Only one of the schools that said that textbooks are now coming faster estimated the time to get textbooks as shorter than it actually is. Most of the schools that made a short estimate said that textbooks are now being received slower. Only five schools estimated the time needed to get a textbook as much longer than it actually is.

It is unlikely that all of the complaints about the time lag in getting textbooks is due to schools overestimating the length of time it takes the school to receive the book. Rather, the actual delays in receiving books are typically longer than the delays that school staff complain about.

Schools were much more likely to estimate the time needed to get library books as longer than it actually is. Nine schools estimated the time required to get a library book as shorter than the actual time, while 14 estimated a much higher figure.

The estimates of average times by the schools for both library books and textbooks could be affected by deliveries of books they have received recently or by different school personnel filling out the libraries and textbook sections of the questionnaire. Few schools keep systematic records of the actual time elapsed.

Table 5 presents a comparison of the length of time a book spends at different stages of the ordering and processing system. The number and percent was calculated for those cases in which a book spent longer in Media Services than it did between being ordered and received from the vendor. Because transaction dates were missing in 14% to 83% of the cases, percentage comparisons are based on only those cards which contained transaction dates.

The number of days between an order being received by Media Services and sent to the vendor (Time 1) was longer than the number of days between ordering and receiving the book from the vendor (Time 2)

Table 5

Time Taken by Media Services Compared to the Time Taken by the Vendor
(Excluding Cards with Missing Dates)

	Textbooks			Library Books		
	Elementary	Jr. High	Sr. High	Elem.	Jr. High	Sr. High
Time 1 (ordering) compared to Time 2 (vendor)						
Time 1 greater than Time 2	320 9.8%	100 7.0%	20 1.5%	200 10.6%	260 11.5%	340 16.5%
Time 1 less than Time 2	2,940 90.2%	1,320 93.0%	1,300 98.5%	1,680 89.4%	2,000 88.5%	1,720 83.5%
Total dated cards	3,260 100%	1,420 100%	1,320 100%	1,880 100%	2,260 100%	2,060 100%
Time 3 (processing) compared to Time 2 (vendor)						
Time 3 greater than Time 2	60 1.9%	40 2.9%	40 2.9%	760 20.4%	1,000 29.9%	900 28.5%
Time 3 less than Time 2	3,080 98.1%	1,360 97.1%	1,760 97.8%	2,960 79.6%	2,340 70.1%	2,260 71.5%
Total dated cards	3,140 100%	1,400 100%	1,800 100%	3,720 100%	3,340 100%	3,160 100%
Time 1 + Time 3 compared to Time 2 (ordering and processing vs. time at vendor)						
Time 1 + 3 greater than Time 2	400 13.1%	180 12.9%	80 6.1%	940 51.1%	1,080 44.2%	1,020 49.5%
Time 1 + 3 less than Time 2	2,660 86.9%	1,220 87.1%	1,240 93.9%	900 48.9%	1,260 55.8%	1,040 50.5%
Total dated cards	3,060 100%	1,400 100%	1,320 100%	1,840 100%	2,260 100%	2,060 100%

in 1.5% of the cases of senior high textbooks, 7.0% of junior high textbooks, and 9.8% of elementary school textbooks. The percentages were somewhat higher for library books: 16.5% of senior high books, 11.5% of junior high books and 10.6% of elementary books.

The disparity between textbooks and library books was greater when the length of time spent in processing (Time 3) was compared to Time 2. 2.9% of the senior high textbooks, 6.3% of the junior high textbooks and 1.9% of the elementary school textbooks take longer to be processed than to come from the vendor. The percentages for library books are 28.5% of senior high books, 29.9% of junior high books, and 20.4% of elementary books. This reflects the much longer processing time of library books.

Finally, Time 1 and Time 3 were added together and compared to Time 2. Again, a much higher percentage of library books than textbooks spent longer at Media Services than they did coming from the vendor. 6.1% of senior high textbooks, 12.9% of junior high textbooks and 13.1% of elementary school textbooks spent longer in Media Services than coming from the vendor, compared to 49.5% of senior high library books, 44.2% of junior high library books and 51.1% of elementary library books. Although these comparisons are based only on those cards with transaction dates, the Evaluation Department assumes that these percentages represent a minimum number of cases. Since an almost perfect correlation exists between missing transaction dates and a longer time lag in ordering and processing books, it is likely that if more data were available, the percentage of items for which the time at Media Services is greater than the time at the vendor would be even larger than those shown in Table 5.

The question of acceptable operating performance is subjective since it presupposes a standard of acceptability. A review of professional library literature was done to establish what are acceptable delays in centralized processing operations. No studies have been done in this area, and standards apparently do not exist. In the opinion of the Evaluation Department, first, there should be no items for which Time 1 is greater than Time 2, and there certainly should not be percentages greater than 10%. In addition to typing requisitions from the snapout forms that the schools send in, Media Services checks some orders to complete or correct the orders sent by the schools. It is not known what percentage of the orders have to be checked for additional information. For example, as Table 1 shows, 11.7% of elementary textbooks take over 30 days to have a requisition typed. Ideally, Media Services should be able to prepare a requisition within ten days, yet all but one of the six mean times in Table 1 was longer than ten days.

Second, as Table 5 shows, approximately 50% of the library books spend more time being handled by Media Services than they are handled by the vendor. This seems excessive even when the number of processing steps is considered.

Third, as Table 5 shows, 25 to 30% of all library books take longer to be processed that it takes the vendor to send the book. Processing times are given in Table 3, and that table shows that 17% to 22% of all library books take over 30 days to be processed. Six percent of elementary and junior high books take longer than 60 days to be processed. These proportions seem excessive. The Evaluation Department has evidence that a small proportion of books are simply misplaced or temporarily lost.

Finally, given that some schools have complained about delays, and given that the actual number of days between when a school orders a book and when it gets it were greater than the school's subjective estimations, the Evaluation Department generally concludes that the time lags described above are unacceptable to many District personnel that Media Services deals with.

Loss of Control

Eight of the schools complained that they have experienced a loss of control over ordering and processing procedures since the expansion of the centralized system. The most frequent complaint of this kind was that it is no longer possible to tell where a book is in the ordering and processing system. When textbooks were ordered by the individual schools, teachers were able to find out approximately when they could expect the book for their classes. For example, they could find out if the books had been received from the vendor and would be available in a few days or if, on the other hand, the vendor had had to back-order the books and they would not be arriving for several more weeks. If schools call Media Services, this information is available, but the more requests for the status of orders Media Services has to handle, the less processing they are able to do. Six schools said that Media Services has been very helpful when they called for this information, while other schools said that they have been discouraged from calling by the Media Services staff.

A second frequent complaint about loss of control is that when the schools processed their own books, they knew which books were in immediate demand and could prioritize the processing. These books could then be processed and made available to students promptly, while books for which there was less demand could wait. For example, school staff say that because Media Services does not have as close contact with the teachers, they cannot be aware of which books are needed by classes immediately and are unable to prioritize their processing as the schools did. Media Services does expedite those books for which the schools have submitted rush orders, but sometimes books which were at rush orders originally will be in immediate demand by the time they arrive from the vendor. Also, the Coordinator of Media Services said that Media Services would not be able to provide special handling if schools sent rush orders too often.

A third complaint is that since the books are now processed before they arrive at the school, it is no longer possible to return books to the vendor if the books which arrive are not the ones wanted. Errors can occur at any stage of the ordering procedure; the number of students expected to take a class can be overestimated, orders can be duplicated, or the wrong title ordered or sent by the vendor. The schools have to accept the books or lose their money. Also, because books can't be seen before they are processed, three of the media specialists interviewed complained that they now preview material. These media specialists said that they are reluctant to order books which may be too elementary or too sophisticated for their students. Since it is frequently not possible to preview material, the media specialists base their selection decisions on reviews. If there is any doubt about the material, it may be passed over. Some books which may be useful are overlooked because of this.

Personnel at two schools complained that since the schools no longer order and process books themselves, they are not able to keep as accurate figures of the amount of money left in their textbook and library book accounts as they did previously. Both schools said that the financial statements from Oregon Total Information Service (OTIS) are one to two months behind their expenditures. Because the schools don't get timely financial information from the computer services, one of these schools asked that the price of each book be written in the order slip. The schools do get the invoices from the book orders, but the invoices don't arrive at the same time as the books and order slips because vendors usually do not send the invoices at the same time they send the books. A good deal of secretarial time has to be spent matching the two. The Coordinator of Media Services said that the invoices should be an adequate record of the amount the schools have spent.

The Evaluation Department believes that these complaints reflect actual conditions, and it is inevitable that some loss of control resulted when ordering and processing were centralized. As more steps are added between the vendor and the school, schools have less control over their individual needs. This report concludes that there is no way that control of these facets of ordering and processing could be returned to the schools and a centralized system still be maintained.

Quality of Cataloging and Processing

Two of the senior high school librarians have been particularly dissatisfied with the cataloging and processing that has been received from Media Services. None of the other schools which were asked about this felt that this was a serious problem. Both

Librarians have complained that the cataloging is not sufficiently detailed for senior high libraries, and in some cases has been incorrect. They said that the level of cataloging they have received would be more appropriate in the smaller library collections of the elementary or junior high schools. Media Services said that books which are used in both the elementary and secondary schools are cataloged twice, once with simplified cataloging for secondary schools. The two senior high librarians feel that the processing has been poorly done. As examples, they mentioned the number on the back spine and card not agreeing, incorrect spellings on catalog cards, and illegible numbering on book spines. Both librarians complained that when books are returned to Media Services to have errors corrected, it is poorly done and the errors can still be seen. Media Services has tried to allow for some flexibility in the cataloging and processing of books for the different schools. However, more individual processing takes more time and adds to the processing time of the books.

Media Services said that it has taken some steps to improve service and reduce processing errors. Until recently, the processing clerks checked each other's work for accuracy. Because of the complaints about errors in processing, the catalogers began checking the processing clerks' work a few months ago in an effort to improve accuracy. One of the senior high librarians who had complained about the processing said that there has been some reduction in the number of errors since the catalogers have been made responsible for the processors' work.

Effect of Centralization on School Staffing

Although one of the stated advantages of a centralized ordering/processing system was that it would result in savings of staff time and salaries, six of the school personnel interviewed complained that so far, it has failed to accomplish this. These complaints were generally of two types: First, school staff is spending as much or more time ordering and processing material as they did before the expansion of centralized ordering and processing, and second, since students or volunteers did much of the processing when it was done at the schools, it is not economical to hire people to do work which was done by volunteer labor formerly.

No cost analyses or staffing studies were done when ordering and processing was done by the individual schools. In the questionnaire, the schools were asked to compare the amount of time clerical and certificated staff spent ordering and processing textbooks before and after the expansion of centralized ordering and processing. Since no studies had been done, the schools were only able to provide subjective responses to this question. Because there was considerable variation in the responses, the answers are not definitive in reconstructing past performance.

Kelly Junior High consistently reported that the amount of classroom time spent studying and processing material had decreased since centralization. If the right, seven out of the amount of classroom time spent has decreased, and one said that it had remained about the same. The responses of other schools were more diverse. Two of the senior high schools thought that [illegible] productivity, one had decreased, seven said that the classroom time spent had decreased, and four said that it had remained about the same.

These schools which perceived an increase in the amount of classroom time spent frequently attributed the increase to the lighting of the computer rooms. Two schools felt that the classroom studying had increased, while five spent processing had decreased or remained the same. If the schools which reported a decrease in the amount of classroom time spent, the estimates ranged from a [illegible] decrease to a 100% decrease, with an average estimate of [illegible]. These schools which thought the amount of classroom studying and processing had increased cited computerization as the reason. Increases of [illegible] were [illegible] to 100%. It is not possible to verify these subjective estimates. The variety of answers may reflect the different needs of various school programs.

As a result of the expansion of centralized studying and processing, each of the four senior high schools had [illegible]. All four senior high librarians considered that this had affected the amount of services they are able to provide. Three of the librarians considered that they are now doing more classroom studying than previously and processing was encouraged since the centralized system. Smaller high schools appear to have been affected the most from this loss of staff. Since Smaller had less staff to begin with, [illegible] librarian originally, the loss of staff has resulted in the library being closed during one of the lunch periods each day, since there is not enough staff to keep the library open.

Slightly more schools thought that professional time spent studying and processing had remained the same. Twenty schools--four junior high schools, four junior high schools--reported that the amount of professional time spent had remained about the same. The slight increase in this category is because most of the studying and processing which were centralized were classroom tasks, so the librarian spent more time offsite on professional study. These schools which did not answer this question usually gave this as the reason.

Eleven schools [illegible] stated, three junior high and one senior high thought that the amount of professional time spent had decreased. Estimates of the percentage of decrease ranged from [illegible] to 100%, with an average of [illegible]. Only six elementary schools and one junior high school thought that the amount of professional time had increased. These estimates range from [illegible] to 100%, with an average of [illegible].

The senior high school libraries estimated that approximately 20% of their time was spent cataloging library books when this was done by the schools.

The librarians at two senior high schools said the amount of professional time saved by centralized ordering of materials is deceiving. Each book must still be looked over thoroughly before the librarian can use it effectively for reference or research assistance with students and teachers and coordinate it with the curriculum. When the cataloging was done at the school, the librarians familiarized themselves with the books while cataloging them.

There was no apparent relationship between the schools that thought the amount of clerical or professional time spent ordering and processing books had increased, and those schools which do a lot of additional processing on textbooks or library books after they reach the school.

All school types do more additional processing on textbooks than on library books. All four senior high schools do additional processing on 100% of their textbooks. Three junior high schools and eleven elementary schools reported that they do additional processing on textbooks. Four schools did additional processing on 20% or less of their textbooks; the other ten schools do additional processing on more than 75% of their textbooks. Many of the elementary and junior high schools that reported that they do additional processing on a high percentage of their textbooks said that this additional processing was typing inventory cards. Media Services used to make inventory cards for all textbooks, but stopped doing this as their workload grew.

Only three of the elementary schools do additional processing on library books after they are received from Media Services. None of the three schools did additional processing on more than 5% of their books. Five of the junior high schools do additional processing on library books. The percent of books that receive additional processing ranged from 1% to 100%, for an average of 38%. All four senior high schools do additional processing on library books. The percent of books that receive additional processing range from 10% to 100%, for an average of 71%.

If any generalization can be made from the schools' responses to these questions, it would be that the majority of schools do not think that staff time spent ordering and processing materials at the schools has decreased since the expansion of centralized ordering and processing. Fifty-seven percent of the schools thought that the amount of clerical time spent has increased or remained the same. Seventy-one percent of the schools thought that the amount of professional time spent has increased or remained the same. Since the schools have not kept any records, it

cannot be determined if their responses reflect the actual situation. However, a majority of the schools do not perceive the expansion of centralized ordering and processing as achieving the goal of reducing the amount of time the school staff spends ordering and processing materials.

The schools were asked what percentage of the processing of textbooks was done by students or volunteers before the expansion of centralized ordering and processing. There had been complaints that cost had increased due to the necessity of hiring clerks to do work which had previously been done by volunteer labor. The least volunteer labor was used by the elementary schools. Only six of the schools reported that students or volunteers had done processing of textbooks. At four of the schools, less than 15% of the books were processed by volunteer labor. At the other two schools, over 90% of the textbooks were processed by students or volunteers. Eight of the junior and four of the senior high schools used students or volunteers to process textbooks before the expansion of centralized ordering and processing. According to the schools, an average of 63% of the junior high textbooks and 76% of the senior high textbooks had been processed by students or volunteers.

An average of 73% of the library books were processed by volunteer labor at the four senior high schools before the expansion of the centralized ordering and processing system. Most schools said that only a small percentage of the paid staff's time was spent supervising the students or volunteers who did the processing. The schools estimated than an average of 13% of the paid staff's time was spent supervising volunteer labor.

While Media Services does use students and volunteers to help with the processing of library books and textbooks, they don't have as many students to draw upon. At the junior and senior high schools, students receive class credit for working in the library. Those librarians who were interviewed said that there are usually one to six students working in the library during each class period. The number of students working in the library varies between schools. Much of this student time is now used to reshelve books, keep the shelves in order and to staff the circulation desk. There is no way of judging if the students and volunteers were as efficient as the paid staff of Media Services. Two of the senior high school librarians maintain that better-quality processing was done by the students and volunteers than is currently received from Media Services; however, it is not possible to determine the validity of this claim.

Given the lack of planning and financial analysis accompanying the implementation of the new program, this report concludes that while it is not possible to determine the relative cost efficiency of the new program, there are grounds for believing that the new program is at least as costly as the old program.

School Satisfaction with Centralized Ordering and Processing

Despite complaints about the centralized ordering and processing, many schools are committed to the continuation of this system. The greatest satisfaction was with the centralized ordering and processing of audiovisual materials. 89.7% of the elementary schools want Media Services to continue ordering and processing audio-visual materials. 10.3% think that the individual schools should order audio-visual materials, but Media Services should process them. Junior and senior high schools were integrated into the audio-visual material ordering and processing in March, 1976. The Evaluation Department did not study the time lag in audio-visual materials ordered by the elementary schools.

There was also considerable support for centralized ordering and processing of library books. 81.0% of the schools wanted Media Services to continue ordering and processing of library books. Eight schools qualified their answers and said that the centralized system should be continued if it can be done faster. 11.9% of the schools thought that the ordering and processing of library books should be done by the individual schools. 4.8% of the schools thought that individual schools should order library books, but Media Services should process them. One school (2.4%) thought that the District should have processing done by a commercial processor such as Baker & Taylor.

Centralized ordering and processing of textbooks received the least support from the schools. In the responses to the questionnaire, 46.5% of the schools thought that the ordering and processing of textbooks should continue to be done by Media Services. Three of those 20 schools said that centralized ordering and processing should continue only if it can be done faster. One school wanted centralized ordering and processing continued only if a union file were kept centrally to enable the schools to share materials. 39.5% wanted the ordering and processing of textbooks to be returned to the individual schools. 11.6% of the schools thought that the individual schools should order the books, but Media Services should process them. One school (2.3%) thought that ordering, processing and inventory control of textbooks should be computerized.

While dissatisfaction with centralized ordering and processing of library books is generally limited to the senior high schools, dissatisfaction with centralized processing of textbooks is common at all grade levels. 34.7% of the elementary schools, 37.5% of the junior high schools and 75.0% of the senior high schools think that the ordering and processing of textbooks should be returned to the individual schools. One elementary school principal said that he feels that Media Services should not spend its time putting inventory numbers on elementary textbooks, and if it stopped doing this, it would relieve some of the pressure from Media Services.

The Coordinator of Media Services surveyed the elementary schools for their opinions of the necessity of putting inventory numbers on elementary school textbooks. In her letter to the schools, she said that no response would be considered a "yes". Of the schools that replied, 13 said that they wanted Media Services to continue putting inventory numbers on the texts, and 11 said that they thought this should be discontinued. One of the schools that voted to continue having the inventory numbers put on textbooks qualified its answer by saying that their primary concern was prompt delivery and numbering should continue only if it "does not appreciably delay delivery of the books."

This agrees with comments that the Evaluation Department received in response to the questionnaire. A number of schools appear to be primarily concerned with receiving their books promptly and are generally willing to try alternatives which may make the books more quickly available for the use of the students and teachers.

Two junior high schools said that they would like to have a flexible system so that materials would be ordered and processed by Media Services normally, but rush orders would be ordered and processed by the individual schools. One of the senior high school librarians said that she would prefer a system in which the individual schools would be given the choice of participating in all or part of a centralized ordering and processing system.

Satisfaction with the centralized system appears to be directly related to the length of time the school has been participating in the system. The greatest dissatisfaction is with centralized ordering and processing of textbooks. This was begun in July, 1974 for the senior highs and January, 1975 for the elementary and junior high schools. This can also be seen in the responses to the question about library book ordering and processing. 93.2% of the elementary schools, which have had their library books ordered and processed by Technical Services since 1950, wanted to continue centralized ordering and processing of library books, while 75.0% of the senior high schools, which had their library books integrated into the system in November, 1974 wanted the ordering and processing of library books returned to the individual schools.

Since the possibility of computerizing the ordering and processing system went beyond the scope of this study, this was not explored; however, the Evaluation Department does not believe that there is any cheap way to computerize the flow of ordering and processing.

Because of the specialized needs of the senior high schools and the recent integration of their books into the centralized system, it is likely that there will continue to be dissatisfaction with

centralized ordering and processing at that school level. Since the elementary schools have been part of the system longer and have limited staff, they are generally more interested in the continuation of centralized ordering and processing, at least for library books. If it is decided that some of the responsibilities of Media Services need to be eliminated, altered or reorganized for more effective functioning, the relative satisfaction of the different school levels should be taken into account when these decisions are made.

Magazine and Newspaper Subscriptions

Magazine and newspaper subscriptions have been centrally ordered since 1950.

Until recently, there have been no major problems with subscriptions; however, at the beginning of the 1975-76 school year, many of the subscriptions did not start on time. It was not possible to establish what proportion of the subscriptions were affected for what lengths of time, since Media Services does not keep any statistics on this. When a school finds that it is not receiving a magazine, it notifies Media Services, which in turn contacts the vendor or publisher. Since the magazines are sent directly to the school, Media Services does not follow up on the complaints. The school maintains its own check-in file and if the magazine still fails to arrive, the school once again notifies Media Services. The senior high school librarians interviewed were particularly upset about the delay in receiving magazines, since their students use the magazines for research material. Because magazine publishers print a limited number of copies of each issue, it is frequently impossible for schools to replace missed issues if their subscriptions do not start on time. This leaves permanent gaps in the collection.

Three of the four senior high librarians interviewed said that they think that multiple-year subscriptions would ease the problem of not getting magazines and newspapers promptly. They said that multiple-year subscriptions would mean fewer gaps in the collection and would save money, since they usually cost less per year.

The budget is the main consideration in the question of single-year versus multiple-year subscriptions. The Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs said that an operational budget is supposed to be for one year only and that the Oregon Revised Statute in Chapter 294 forbids school districts from obligating themselves for expenditures before a budget is passed. The Assistant Superintendent, however, has not requested a legal opinion on this point from the District's attorneys, and states that he is not sure where in

ORS 294 the restriction is. Furthermore, he stated that multiple-year subscriptions would inflate the budget for a given year.

The Coordinator of Media Services said that multiple-year subscriptions would not be as much of an advantage as the librarians believe. If a magazine were to go out of business, the library would lose its money for the remainder of the subscription or the publisher might substitute another magazine that the library would not want. Also, the content of a magazine might change so it would no longer be suitable for a school library.

According to the Coordinator of Media Services, the delay between sending an order to a vendor and receiving the initial delivery has increased from three months to five or six months.

In order to facilitate getting subscriptions by the beginning of the school year, Media Services will begin ordering magazines and newspapers on a January-to-January basis in 1976-77. This will involve stretching a point on the budget, but it will be possible. The schools will continue to send in their orders in the spring, but instead of starting in September, the subscriptions will start in January. This will give the publishers the five to six month lead time they now require and should eliminate the problem of subscriptions not starting on time. Those librarians with whom this was discussed feel that it may improve the situation, and is worth trying.

Although some librarians have been asking for multiple-year subscriptions for several years before the current problems in receiving subscriptions developed, they would probably be satisfied with the January-to-January subscription plan if that succeeds in substantially reducing the number of magazines not received. If this proves not to be the case, further consideration of multiple-year subscriptions may be valuable if the problem of obligating the school district for expenditures before the budget is passed can be resolved. Multiple-year subscriptions do not have to inflate the budget unduly for any one year, since subscriptions could be staggered.

Other factors to be considered before beginning multiple-year subscriptions would be possible savings in subscription prices and clerical time that may or may not result and whether or not these would be outweighed by the possible demise or content change of a magazine. It is recommended that these factors be studied before a final decision is made.

Union File

Media Services maintains union files of elementary and secondary library books and elementary audio-visual materials. The files are in order by author, and give the location of the book within the District and the number of copies of each book. An audio-visual union file exists and is in order by title. The union file is used by Media Services as a record of the cataloging and classification of books already owned by the District. When additional copies of these books are purchased, the information is readily available so the new copies of the books don't have to be recataloged.

Schools were asked about the usefulness of the union files in the questionnaire. The schools use the union file to find out if other schools own copies of books they wish to borrow. Twenty-three elementary schools and two junior high schools have used the union file of library books; all said they found it useful. Six of the elementary schools, six of the junior high schools and the five senior high school programs said they have never used the union file. Twenty-one of the elementary schools have used the audio-visual union file and found it useful. Ten have not used it.

Personnel at four elementary schools and two junior high schools have asked that the District start a textbook union file and depository so schools would be able to borrow surplus textbooks from each other. Some schools already do this on a limited basis, but it would be facilitated if there were a union file and central depository. People suggesting this idea believe it would save money, since a set of textbooks would not be in storage at one school while another school ordered a set of the same books from a vendor, and that time would be saved since it would be faster to ship books from a District depository than to wait for a set to be received and processed. Moreover, it is claimed that space problems in crowded schools would be alleviated if they didn't have to store textbooks that were no longer in use. At this time, Media Services does not keep a union file for textbooks. It has been keeping permanent order files since shortly after it began ordering and processing textbooks. There are approximately 6,000 cards for elementary and junior high textbooks and 2,800 for senior high textbooks. These give the bibliographic information for the book, the number of copies received and the name of the school. In their present form they would not be useful as a union file because the records are arranged by school rather than by author or title. In order to find out which school owned a particular textbook, it would be necessary to search through the books owned by each school. It would be a formidable job to convert these records to a union file format.

Two schools have suggested that such a file could be maintained by OTIS, so the schools could use a terminal to find out if the books they wanted were available. This request would be viewed by OTIS

as a "special services request" and would have to be presented to the OTIS Advisory Board for their endorsement.

An alternative would be to begin a union file with books which are currently ordered, as was done with the senior high school library books. If this were done, there would be a period of time before enough books were listed in the file to make it useful. Maintenance of a union file would add another step to textbook processing. It would have to be decided if the advantages of a union file would outweigh the possible disadvantage of a longer processing time for textbooks.

Inventory Control

This report notes that it is not possible to readily determine the value of books owned by various schools separately or the District as a whole, and that only rudimentary property inventory procedures are used by the District. It is not possible to find out how many textbooks are in some elementary schools because no inventory cards were kept. In general, it is difficult to determine if unnecessary textbooks are being ordered, because it is not known how many books are not being used. The District will order approximately 70,000 library and text books this year. Does the District need to order them all? Could some savings be effected if existing textbooks could be redistributed? The answers to these questions cannot be determined within the present system.

Media Services Staffing

One of the most important factors contributing to problems with the new system is the staffing of Media Services. Four of the people interviewed and nine of those completing the questionnaire said that they felt that Media Services did not have adequate staff for the volume of work involved. Several of these people added that it is only because of the dedication and hard work of Media Services staff that there have not been more problems with the expansion of this department.

When the first budget proposal was submitted in January, 1975 for the expansion of centralized ordering and processing, the Coordinator of Library Services requested an additional $52,400.00 for staff. This would have provided salaries for two catalogers, a .3 coordinator, one acquisitions paraprofessional, three typists and one textbook clerk. The Superintendent considered this first budget too high, since it was felt that one of the advantages of centralized ordering and processing should be that it would save money. In the second proposed budget two weeks later, the request for additional salaries was reduced to $38,500.00, one cataloger and one typist less than in the original request.

Even though this budget was accepted, funds were not provided for all of the staff requested. Media Services still has the equivalent of one less staff member than requested in the budget proposal. Those hired include one cataloger, .5 acquisitions paraprofessional, two typists and .5 textbook clerk. Each of the four high schools lost the salaries for a 1.0 clerk when the responsibility for processing their books was transferred to Media Services. These salaries were transferred to Media Services and used to offset some of the increase in salaries at Media Services.

Before the new system, Media Services had five clerical and 1.5 professionals. With the money taken from the high schools and the new budget money, three clerical and one professional employee were added. However, in the opinion of the Evaluation Department, the workload added was greater than the additional four positions [illegible]io. If only high school library book order[illegible] and processing [illegible]dded, then the four clerk salaries taken fro[illegible]he high [illegible]ls' budgets should have offset the additiona[illegible]ork. However, [illegible]t[illegible]ook ordering and processing was also added, and no additional staf[illegible]ng was provided to offset the increased textbook work.

In 1974-75, a total of 38,091 items were processed, including library materials and texts. This is half the number of items estimated in the budget proposals prepared by the Media Coordinator's office. Yet Media Services was overwhelmed by the volume of work.

Textbook ordering and processing was formerly done largely by secretaries, students and volunteers. For example, the questionnaires returned from the schools estimated that 63% to 76% textbook processing in the junior and senior highs was done by volunteers.

The new system has transferred many invisible costs incurred by a large number of people to a single, visible, centralized cost center. Since no documentation exists discussing the rationale or cost analysis for the new system, this evaluation concludes that costs of the old system were probably underestimated. This estimation and the necessity to have a smaller budget for the new system to justify its cost-effectiveness led to a situation in which staffing levels were not made commensurate with actual workloads. The explicit decision to staff Media Services at the lower levels of the revised budget was also an implicit decision to incur longer time periods in the ordering and processing of books.

This original imbalance has been further skewed by an increase in the workload of Media Services. Between 1973-74 when only elementary and junior high library books and elementary audio-visual materials were centrally ordered and processed, and 1974-75 when Media Services was expanded to include all library and textbooks, the clerical staff

increased from five to eight and the professional staff increased from 1.5 to 2.5, an increase of 37.5% and 40% respectively. During this same period, the number of items processed rose from 14,295 in 1973-74 to 38,091 in 1974-75, a 62% increase. Statistics are not yet available for the entire 1975-76 school year, but those for the first six months show a continued rise. Table 6 presents workload statistics and percent of change for July through December of the last three years and illustrates this point.

Table 6

Items Processed Versus Staffing Levels for July - December Period for 1973, 1974 and 1975

	Staff						
	Processing Load		Professional		Clerical		Student & Volunteer
	Number	Percentage Increase Over Previous Year	Number	Percentage Increase Over Previous Year	Number	Percentage Increase Over Previous Year	
July-Dec 1973	7,841		1.5		5		15 hrs/wk
July-Dec 1974	16,300	51.9%	2.5	40.0%	8	37.5%	25 hrs/wk (40.0%)
July-Dec 1975	35,332	53.9%	2.5	0.0%	8	0.0%	48 hrs/wk (48.0%

As can be seen, while staff has increased, it has not kept pace with the increases in the workload. Also, the processing totals do not reflect all of the material handled. Paperback textbooks for South Region, elementary and junior high library paperbacks, and elementary school workbooks are not processed by Media Services and have not been included in the processing totals until recently. Even though these items are not processed, they do add to Media Services' workload. They are ordered and received by Media Services before being distributed to the schools. Because Media Services has not kept statistics on these, it is not possible to estimate the number of items in this category. Media Services began including these books in their processing totals in March, 1976.

While the workload of Technical Services has grown, the amount of time the Coordinator of Media Services is able to devote to its supervision has decreased. Four of those interviewed said that they thought some of the problems were related to a lack of supervision of the Technical Services section. Before the District reorganization, the Coordinator of Library Services was responsible for the supervision of one area and 6.5 staff members. Since she has become Coordinator of Media Services, she became responsible for four areas and 16.5 staff members.

This report concludes that the Technical Services section of Media Services was understaffed when the program began and is currently understaffed. The degree of understaffing is not estimated in this report.

The understaffing is perceived by school staff and undoubtedly contributes to the length of time taken to order and process books; this in turn leads to professionally inappropriate work habits such as not putting transaction dates on cards, and makes any inquiry from a school compete for staff time with a volume of work which is large and increasing. This latter effect creates a climate situation in which general controversy exists about the program.

If the program is going to continue without general controversy, then either some improvement in staffing must take place, or the work responsibilities of Media Services should be analyzed, and if necessary, eliminated, altered or reassigned.

Response of Program Officials to Complaints

The problems of centralized ordering/processing have been intensified by a lack of communication. Four of the librarians interviewed said they feel that in general, decisions about library services are being made without asking the people in the program, and without any understanding of what good library service is. For example, in the Coordinator of Library Services' budget proposal of January 17, 1974, she said, "the matter of investigating and discussing the advantages and disadvantages of a complete processing operation may be a matter which all District librarians and principals should consider before it is ever implemented." Despite this suggestion, apparently there was only limited participation by school staff in this decision. According to the Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, senior high school principals were consulted before this decision was made.

The four high school principals were asked if they had been consulted. Three of the four said that while they knew of the plan to expand centralized ordering and processing, they were not asked

for their opinions of the planned expansion. The other one was asked if such an expansion would help the library situation at his school. None of the librarians interviewed said that they had been consulted before this decision was made. Once the decision to expand centralized ordering and processing was made, the Coordinator of Media Services and the librarians met in an effort to reach a consensus about how the transition was to be accomplished.

In the questionnaire the schools were asked about Media Services' attitude when the schools called with questions or complaints about either textbooks or library books. 67% of the schools said that the staff of Media Services is always responsive to these calls. 28% said that Media Services' staff is usually responsive, and 5% said that they were seldom responsive. It appears that the level of response varies with the type of complaint that Media Services receives. When the schools call Media Services with questions or complaints about particular books that have been ordered, the staff of Media Services is generally considered to be helpful by the schools; however, when the schools have complaints about the centralized ordering and processing system in general, their complaints usually are not resolved.

Although some complaints had already been made about the time lag in receiving materials, the review of centralized ordering and processing from July, 1974 to February, 1975, prepared by the Coordinator of Media Services and dated March 17, 1975, largely ignores the possibility of a time lag.

Again, in the Coordinator of Media Services' ten-page response to the draft copy of this report, she generally ignores the issue of a time lag, although this was the area that concerned the greatest number of schools.

The recurring complaints about centralized ordering and processing since January, 1974 and their apparent lack of resolution are looked at in this section. For the period beginning January 1, 1974, 18 written complaints about the new system have been identified from the files of the Media Coordinator's office and the regional directors' offices. These complaints are listed in Table 7. Eighteen complaints represents a minimum number, since other unrecorded complaints were undoubtedly made. The undated complaints are probably from fall, 1974.

The administrative chain of command runs from the Superintendent's office, to the Assistant Superintendent for Business Services, to the Media Services office. The response to these offices is considered below in turn.

The Superintendent's office received approximately 13 of the 18 complaints. The exact number could not be determined because the complaints had not been filed as of April, 1974. The only complaint addressed directly to the Superintendent was responded to and also passed on to the offices of the Assistant Superintendent and Media Services Coordinator.

Table 7

List of Complaints

	School		
1.	[illegible]	January 8, 1975	Principal to Superintendent
2.	Sheldon	February 11, 1975	Librarian to Principal and Curriculum Specialist
3.	Churchill	April 8, 1975	Librarian to Coordinator of Media Services
4.	Churchill	June 10, 1975	Librarian to Regional Director
5.	Roosevelt	September 5, 1975	Principal to Regional Director
6.	South Eugene	September 11, 1975	Librarian to Coordinator of Media Services
7.	South Eugene	September 16, 1975	Social Studies Department Chairman to Coordinator of Media Services
8.	South Eugene	September 25, 1975	Teacher to Librarian
9.	Spencer Butte	October 1, 1975	Teacher to Librarian
10.	Spencer Butte	October 1, 1975	Teacher to Principal
11.	South Eugene	October, 1975	Social Studies Department Chairman to Regional Director
12.	Churchill	undated	Librarian to Regional Director
13.	Spencer Butte	undated	Language Arts Coordinator to Principal
14.	Spencer Butte	undated	Librarian to Regional Director
15.	South Eugene	undated	Foreign Language Department Chairman to Regional Director
16.	Harris	undated	Unidentified to Fellow Citizen
17.	Unidentified	undated	Unidentified to Coordinator of Media Services
18.	South Eugene	undated	Teacher to Unidentified

Three of the 13 complaints are known to have been made by the Brattleboro Superintendent for Business Services. However, he said that he was unwilling to state which complaints came to his attention. He further stated that the head of Public Services informed him of all complaints and that his usual response to writers was the document describing the complaints and sent it back to Public Services. He said that inconsistent complaints have not been received by the program, but that some complaints have been received and each has been given attention.

The Brattleboro Superintendent's office does not keep a separate file of complaints. The complaint file of the Public Services Coordinator shows that two of the 13 complaints were written both by the Brattleboro Superintendent. According to the Coordinator of Public Services, these were two-thirds of the complaints were taken by the Brattleboro Superintendent, since she felt that he was more apt than others to be bothered about the complaints. In March, 1972 the Coordinator of Public Services sent a memo to the Brattleboro Superintendent asking for a directive on whether or not to respond to complaints in writing. She felt that preparing written responses to the complaints took too much staff time away from the ordering and processing of the books. According to the Coordinator of Public Services, the Brattleboro Superintendent split her time also did not have to continue to respond to complaints in writing. Since then, she has responded to complaints verbally, but has not prepared written answers to complaints.

The Brattleboro Superintendent was assigned to a meeting on October 20, 1972 called by school personnel to the Youth region to discuss regional complaints. The service philosophy that meeting felt that it could be described as a "crowded" in that no written was taken. For example, the minutes of the meeting of October 20 simply that "the Brattleboro Superintendent mentioned that there is a district-wide survey in progress to evaluate all of the departments in the schools. Scripted building and that he would like to inform the results of that survey and also consider the setting of issues presented at this meeting before making any recommendations for change." Youth region personnel did not contact the Brattleboro Superintendent after the meeting, and the Brattleboro Superintendent did not contact them.

In March of 1973, during an interview conducted for the purposes of this evaluation, the Brattleboro Superintendent was asked if he had digested the results of the district-wide survey referred to above. He said he had not had much chance. When asked if he had a complaint to resolve the program, he stated he was awaiting the results of the Coordinator Department's work. He also administrative plan for responding to complaints on requiring particular services of the program service.

The complaint file of the Public Services office contains all 13 of the complaints identified. Written responses to four of the complaints are contained in the file. The Public Services Coordinator is personally

to be "defensive" or "curt" by five of those interviewed and by one of those responding to the questionnaire. In general, responses to complaints about time lags appear to ignore the complaints and are focused instead on other, smaller complaints.

In the Coordinator of Media Services' reply of April 28, 1976 to the draft of this paper, she said that the response of Media Services staff to complaints may depend upon the attitude of those expressing the complaints. She said that if Media Services staff had been asked about the attitude of those complaining, "the reply would have been that from two senior highs, one junior high, and three elementary schools, complaints are mostly abstract, accusatory, abusive and harassing--rarely concrete and constructive. Example (this was noted: Caller: 'What do you have working down there--a bunch of imbeciles or elementary school kids?' Staff member: 'What is the trouble?' Caller: 'Between the Superintendent's arbitrary decisions on staffing and all the other garbage that goes on down there, it's about time someone thought of the schools.' Staff member: 'Is there any specific problem that we can help you with?' Caller: 'Yes, you can send back our 1/2 time aide so we can get some work done here.' Staff member: 'We don't have anything to do with decisions on staffing. Perhaps you should call the Superintendent. Shall I give you his extension.' Caller: 'Never mind.' Caller hung up abruptly. Media Services' response no doubt classified by evaluator as 'curt and defensive.' Other instances can be cited, but the foregoing is typical of discourteous calls by certain schools and/or individuals. Such calls are demoralizing to the staff and affect the efficiency and speed of their production, in my opinion. Complaints or requests for explanation from all other schools are mostly concrete, constructive, and courteous. Human nature being what it is, I suspect that the latter calls are handled with greater efficiency and promptness. Responses from Media Services are business-like and courteous."

Some changes in procedures of Media Services have been made in response to complaints, for example, making catalogers responsible for the processing clerks' work to reduce the number of processing errors. However, no real attempt to deal with the major problem of the time lag in receiving materials has been made. It is as if by ignoring the unpleasant realities of the situation, they could be made to disappear.

In the opinion of the Evaluation Department, administrative response to complaints has not been consistent, coordinated across various offices, or generally responsive. This administrative response is partially understandable since an understaffed department faced with increasing workloads cannot make any effective changes to reduce the time lag in ordering and processing of books.

Recommendations

The Evaluation Department recommends that:

1. The Media Services Department should establish a set of goals and objectives. Some portion of these goals and objectives should be tied into periodic reviews of actual time lags in ordering and processing steps. The time lags should be established by using the transaction dates on the order cards.

2. A permanent advisory committee be established to provide a talking place between Media Services and the school personnel affected by this program. Membership of this committee should include representative media specialists/librarians from all school levels. This committee would act as a review body for Media Services' operation and would serve to alleviate the communication problem in this area. This committee should work with Media Services to establish performance levels, explore the possibility of alternative or flexible procedures, monitor program performance, and perform other advisory activities such as review of a regularly-published report on Media Services' operation or a review of Media Services' goals and objectives. This committee would also provide a forum and study group for topics of concern to school personnel. These topics should include the following, but not be limited to them alone: consideration of a union file and depository for textbooks, and multiple-year magazine and newspaper subscriptions.

3. The Assistant Superintendent's office should direct Media Services to draw up a recommended staffing plan which would state the kinds and amount of staff necessary to perform the work. These recommendations, if necessary, should include an analysis of present workloads and suggestions as to the modification in the workloads. These recommendations should be reviewed for their budgetary implications and a written result of the review should be distributed to appropriate school district personnel.

4. The Superintendent's staff should consider the advisability of charging Media Services with the responsibility for reviewing media materials use and making recommendations for minimizing waste and improving use of existing materials. It is the Evaluation Department's opinion that the Media Services Department should be concerned with the economy and efficiency of Media Services and not be limited to the role of ordering and processing.

5. The administrative supervision of the program should be improved by adding a formal process to record and answer complaints.

6. Since there has been controvery about the possibility of encumbering funds for multiple-year magazine and newspaper subscriptions,

it is recommended that the Assistant Superintendent for Business Services seek a legal opinion on this point. The opinion should be sought despite the new procedures for advance ordering.

7. The Evaluation Department suggests that in the future, a cost analysis be done before major changes are made in District programs, especially in those instances where one of the objectives of the new program is to save money. As can be seen from the difficulties that were encountered in this study, it is not possible to make objective comparisons of cost effectiveness or level of performance, when no records exist on these subjects prior to the change in the program.

Summary

The Evaluation Department's look at the new system of centralized ordering and processing of books was prompted by complaints from numerous school personnel about time lags in receiving books, loss of control of ordering and processing at the school level, and processing errors. Data were collected in 43 interviews, questionnaires sent to all District schools, and a random sample search of 36,000 Media Services orders was made.

Included in this report is a brief history of the District's centralized processing, the methodology used to review the complaints, five tables showing actual time lags involved in the major steps of the ordering and processing broken down by type of book and type of school, discussion of complaints about (1) time lag, (2) the schools' loss of control over books, (3) the quality of cataloging and processing, and (4) the effect of centralization on school staffing. Comments are made on magazine and newspaper subscriptions and Media Services' union file. Factors giving rise to complaints such as staffing problems, and administrative response to complaints are considered, and recommendations for future action are suggested.

The report concludes that: the program was begun without adequate planning and documentation; unacceptably long time lags exist in certain categories of book ordering and processing; consistent recording of transaction dates has not been done; actual delays in receiving books are typically longer than the perceived delays that school staffs complain about; school complaints about loss of control reflect actual conditions but are inevitable in a centralized system; Media Services recognizes that there have been processing errors and is trying to correct this; many schools are committed to the idea of centralized processing; no apparent economies in staff personnel costs have resulted from the new program; only rudimentary property inventory procedures are used and neither book wastage nor unnecessary duplication of book ordering is controlled; Media Services was understaffed when the program was begun and is now understaffed; the understaffing affects Media Services' operations; and response to complaints about the program have been generally inconsistent and are perceived to be defensive. Finally, the report concludes with recommendations for the establishment of an advisory committee, a review of Media Services staffing and other recommendations.